

to a draft memorandum of understanding to end the conflict. The memorandum of understanding not only provided a timetable for disarmament and troop withdrawal, but also granted the people of Aceh with new political powers and the right to retain much of the revenues of resources extracted from the province. The Indonesian President has also granted amnesty to hundreds of Free Aceh Movement members, and the Free Aceh movement has agreed to forgo its demand for independence.

Mr. Speaker, I am sure my colleagues can understand and respect just how difficult it can often be to reach compromises in highly charged political situations. It is precisely because of this fact that we as a Congress should wholeheartedly congratulate the Indonesian government and the Free Aceh Movement for their willingness to compromise. Their ability to compromise has made both parties better off, and perhaps can serve as an example to all of us. I sincerely hope the memorandum of understanding the parties reached will stand the test of time and be the first step toward extended peace for the Aceh region.

Lastly, Mr. Speaker, I believe this country can most show its support of this peace process not only with kind and supportive words, but with kind and supporting actions. I encourage the Secretary of State and the Administrator of the United States Agency for International Development to commit resources in guaranteeing the peace and building a strong civil society in Aceh.

TRIBUTE TO THE COUNTRY OF POLAND

HON. SCOTT GARRETT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Sunday, December 18, 2005

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize and congratulate the country of Poland and its citizens for their successful Presidential and Parliamentary elections.

On October 23rd, a Conservative Law and Justice candidate Lech Kaczynski defeated Civic Platform candidate Donald Tusk in the Presidential Election runoff. A month earlier, in the Parliamentary elections, the Law and Justice Party won a plurality by capturing 27 percent of the vote while the Civic Platform party garnered the 2nd highest amount at 24 percent.

In addition to the remarkable political reform that has swept Poland over the last 15 years, there has been considerable economic progress as well. The Polish GDP continues to grow and because of its skilled workforce and a competitive free market economy, it has received significant foreign investment.

Poland has been a strong ally to the United States in our war on terror and has provided considerable aid to the military and diplomatic efforts in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, I am confident that when President-Elect Kaczynski is sworn in on December 23rd, U.S.-Polish relations will continue to grow and prosper under his leadership.

PROVIDING THAT HAMAS AND OTHER TERRORIST ORGANIZA- TIONS SHOULD NOT PARTICI- PATE IN ELECTIONS HELD BY PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY

SPEECH OF

HON. SCOTT GARRETT

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 14, 2005

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of today's common-sense resolution condemning the participation of terrorist organizations in the Palestinian elections. It is disappointing that Congress even needs to make this statement, yet time and time again, history has proven it is necessary.

The Middle East peace process requires that the Palestinian Authority recognize the right of Israel to exist and that it reject the terrorism and violence that have plagued the region since the 1940s. It stands to reason that this requirement can only be met if the very organizations which threaten peace in the Middle East, such as Hamas and Islamic Jihad, are removed from the official political process.

As it is, these organizations currently operate with little interference or admonition from the Palestinian Authority. Were they to become a part of the governing authority, the integrity of the Palestinian government would be compromised. Clearly, the Authority cannot condemn the anti-Israel and anti-American bias of the same groups of which it is comprised.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to reaffirm their support for our strong ally, Israel, and to support this resolution.

PRESIDENTIAL AUTHORIZATION OF DOMESTIC NSA SPYING

HON. TOM UDALL

OF NEW MEXICO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Sunday, December 18, 2005

Mr. UDALL of New Mexico. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to discuss the recent reports, and admission by President Bush, that he authorized the National Security Agency to spy domestically, and did so without obtaining warrants. Some have noted that it is highly unusual for a President to publicly acknowledge the existence of highly classified intelligence programs. Some believe this is commendable. But Mr. Speaker, his admission was after the fact. After hundreds, possibly thousands, of Americans have had their telephone calls and e-mails monitored with little to no oversight. After he authorized the NSA, an organization tasked with investigating foreign people and entities, to spy on American citizens and other residents living in this country. And after, Mr. Speaker, he urged the New York Times not to report the existence of this program in the first place. Hardly commendable.

Yet these facts alone, though enough to warrant grave concern, are not the end of the story. Further compounding the issue is that the President did this without even seeking warrants, or legal oversight. I wish I could say I was surprised at this, but I cannot. This Administration has pushed the envelope for

power and authority at every opportunity and this is clearly no exception. If truly and absolutely necessary, they could have at the very least obtained warrants from the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court. As the New York Times stated today in an editorial, "The law governing the National Security Agency was written after the Vietnam War because the government had made lists of people it considered national security threats and spied on them. All the same empty points about effective intelligence gathering were offered then, just as they are now, and the Congress, the courts and the American people rejected them." In authorizing this program, this Administration has chosen to ignore precedent, wisdom, and possibly even the Constitution.

The Fourth Amendment clearly states "The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized." I strongly believe that spying on American citizens without first obtaining warrants, or any legal oversight, clearly violates this bedrock principle of our government and our Nation as a whole. I also believe that this program—its inception, its uses, its results, its justification for existence—needs to be thoroughly investigated. I have begun circulating a letter asking the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence to conduct investigations of this. I hope my letter will not be ignored.

Mr. Speaker, no doubt the Administration and its supporters will attempt to paint those questioning the wisdom of this program's existence as weakening our defenses, and undermining our Nation's security and counterterrorism efforts. This is a weak and pathetic justification. There is no question the President must have the best possible intelligence to protect our Nation and its citizens. There is no question the President must conduct programs that are hidden from the public eye in order to gather this intelligence. The question is whether or not these ends can be achieved in accordance with our Constitution, our laws, and in a manner that reflects our values as a Nation.

I hope for the sake of the country, that after the Congress investigates this program, it is not shown that the President broke the law. However, we will only know the answer to that question after Congress exercises its proper oversight responsibility. Something it has failed to do for five years. Despite what this Administration would have us believe, securing our Nation from all enemies both foreign and domestic can be achieved without violations of our civil liberties.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. MARIO DIAZ-BALART

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Sunday, December 18, 2005

Mr. MARIO DIAZ-BALART of Florida. Mr. Speaker, due to issues I had to attend to at home, I was unable to be here for the majority of this legislative week and was unable to vote on important legislation on the floor of the